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Inside Information

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PUBLICATIONS POLICY TO SAVE \$6 MILLION

USDA is expected to save at least \$6 million in fiscal 1983 by adopting the recommendations of a departmental paperwork task force.

Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block said the savings will result from reduced expenditures by USDA's information and publication units.

"I expect additional savings in the future as USDA moves to a user fee program for all publications beginning this October," Secretary Block said.

The Secretary also said he has ordered a new publication management system within USDA which will increase the effort to reduce publications at the agency level, require all new publications and reprints of existing publications to be approved at the under secretary or assistant secretary level, and make the task force a permanent unit, to be renamed the secretary's review board.

Secretary Block said USDA had eliminated over 500 publications from USDA's inventory as a result of the work of the paperwork task force.

GPO AFFECTED BY FEDERAL PUBLICATIONS CUTS

The U.S. Government Printing Office is putting 3,000 employees, or about half of its staff, on part-time furloughs without pay because other federal departments and agencies are reducing the number of publications to be printed.

According to news stories, the planned reductions at GPO are an example of the impact of federal budgetary cutbacks trickling down to a public agency which depends on government contracting.

"Our volume is falling," Danford Sawyer Jr., the public printer said, adding the steps were necessary "because of ... heavy losses."

Sawyer told reporters that GPO spent \$5 million more than it took in during the first five months of fiscal year 1982. The six-month furlough of GPO employees is expected to save about \$4 million.

GPO also announced that it will rescind its recent 16 percent price hike on printing in hopes of attracting increased business from federal agencies, Sawyer said.

TWO REGIONAL INFORMATION OFFICES CLOSE

USDA regional information offices at Dallas, Tex., and New York, N.Y., administered by USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service but serving up to six marketing, inspection and transportation agencies until recently, will be closed March 31.

The two offices, along with three similar regional information offices at Atlanta, Ga., Chicago, Ill., and San Francisco, Calif., have been serving USDA marketing agencies since World War II.

Harold Lewis, retired USDA Director of Information, lamented last week about the closing of the Dallas and New York offices and reduced staffing in the other three regional information offices.

Lewis was instrumental in establishing the five offices during the War Food Administration (of World War II) and nurturing them throughout the years he was USDA Director of Information.

Four states served by the Dallas office--Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma and Texas--and three states served by the New York office--Delaware, Maryland and West Virginia--will be served by the Atlanta office.

Two other states--Colorado and New Mexico--served by Dallas will now be served by the San Francisco office, and Kansas will be served by the Chicago office.

The remainder of the northeastern states served by the New York office will be served from the Chicago office.

A few months ago, all five offices were serving, in addition to the Agricultural Marketing Service, the Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service, Federal Grain Inspection Service, Food Safety & Inspection Service, Office of Transportation and Packers & Stockyards Administration.

After March 31, the Atlanta, Chicago and San Francisco offices will be providing information services only for the Agricultural Marketing Service and the Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service.

Connie Crunkleton is the Southeast regional information director. Her address is Room 206, 1718 Peachtree Street, NW, Atlanta, GA 30309. Telephone number is (404) 257-4154.

Herb Jackson is the Midwest information director. His address is Room 635, 536 South Clark Street, Chicago, IL 60605. Telephone is (312) 353-3631.

Ben Darling is the Western information director. His address is Room 702, 630 Sansome Street, San Francisco, CA 94111. Telephone number is (415) 556-6464.

Harold Bryson was the regional information director at Dallas. Werner Hietsch was the acting regional information director at New York.

FREE USDA CROP REPORTS TO CEASE

Effective June 1, USDA's Statistical Reporting Service will discontinue free distribution of releases through its Crop Reporting Board and will make them available for a fee.

SRS Administrator William Kibler said that eliminating free distribution and putting crop and livestock reports on a paid subscription basis will allow the agency to "continue its agricultural data collection and estimating program on a timely and reliable basis in line with current reduced funding levels."

Effective July 1, the agency will implement a similar user-fee system for reports issued by its state statistical and crop reporting offices.

Further information about this change is available from each state crop reporting office or the secretary of the Crop Reporting Board, Room 5809-S, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250, or call (202) 447-2130.

"AGRICULTURAL IN CLASSROOM" EXPANDING

USDA's "Agriculture in the Classroom" project is expanding, drawing in additional states and new organizations.

As reported previously in "Inside Information," the "Agriculture in the Classroom" project is a cooperative effort designed to help elementary and high schools to teach more about the role of agriculture in the national economy.

The long-range goal is to develop an informed citizenry equipped to take part in the decisionmaking process that affects our food supply.

USDA's Office of Governmental & Public Affairs originated the project by bringing together more than 50 enthusiastic farm group representatives and educators at a problem-solving workshop last summer.

Those at the workshop laid down guidelines for a team of its members to develop a model action plan which will help state groups work with educators to create agricultural materials and programs to fit school curricula in individual states.

They also recommended that USDA produce a resource guide to educational materials about agriculture to help teachers find materials they can use in their classrooms, and to help those organizations producing materials know what is currently available.

Both the state action plan and resource guide will be presented at the second national "Ag in the Classroom" meeting on March 17, and will be available after that for national distribution.

Among the organizations taking part in the project are representatives of the National Farm Bureau Federation, National Farmers Union, American Agri-Women, AAM, National Live Stock and Meat Board, Nebraska Department of Agriculture, Maryland Department of Education, Illinois Council for Economic Education and the National Elementary School Principal's Association.

Additional organizations, including consumer groups, will take part in the May 17 session.

More people are getting involved every day. For example, this year the states of Nebraska, Wyoming, Minnesota, Illinois, Iowa and Colorado have set up state-level groups of farm leaders and educators to encourage more teaching about agriculture in their schools.

Last year, the California Farm Bureau sponsored a "Farm Day" for San Francisco's elementary schools, bringing farmers with their animals and produce into more than 30 schools. This year the program has expanded to Glendale, a suburb of Los Angeles.

The California Farm Bureau is now working year round with school officials, developing teaching materials and training teachers. Their work will make learning where food comes from an integral part of what's being taught in the schools of these two major cities.

In Illinois, teacher training on agricultural issues is being sponsored by economic educators, farm women and the Illinois Department of Agriculture. An ag economics program for 8th graders is being developed by Farm Bureau women in Indiana. And, a resource guide to materials about Nebraska agriculture has been produced by Nebraska's Departments of Agriculture and Education.

At USDA, Sally Katt, education specialist with the Special Programs Center, is coordinating activities. She also keeps up with what's going on in the states and puts people who are working on similar projects in touch with each other.

Anyone wanting more information on the entire program, or anyone who has materials appropriate for general (not vocational agriculture) classes, grades K-12, that you wish to list in the new resource guide, contact Sally Katt, Room 510-A, Office of Governmental & Public Affairs, U.S Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250, or call (202) 447-5163.

MORE JOIN ELECTRONIC MAIL NETWORK

More USDA agency information offices and others are joining the electronic mail network serving agricultural communicators.

USDA's Farmers Home Administration, Foreign Agricultural Service and Economic Management Service (which serves the Economic Research Service and the Statistical Reporting Service) are the latest agency information offices to join the system provided through Dialcom, Inc.

These additions will make 10 agency information offices on the AGR and AGS electronic mail networks serving USDA and land grant universities.

Meanwhile, reports indicate that several farm magazines and others involved in agricultural communications are inquiring and signing onto the electronic mail system.

A new listing of those on the agricultural communicators' electronic mail system will be issued April 1.

It will be sent electronically to all of those on the system. Anyone else wanting a copy should contact Nancy Bevis, Office of Governmental & Public Affairs, Room 407-A, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250, or call (202) 447-7454.

MARKETING & ECONOMICS: 1982 YEARBOOK

Subject for the 1982 Yearbook of Agriculture has been selected by the Secretary of Agriculture.

Title of the book has not been decided yet, but the book will have three major sections: (1) The changing economics of agriculture, (2) farm marketing in a new environment, and (3) smart food buying for consumers.

The opening section will show how agriculture is changing--the financial structure, the increasing dependence on export markets, high cash requirements, production costs, the squeeze on cash flow, land ownership and rental, the pressure on natural resources, the loss of prime land, etc.

The farm marketing section will contain practical marketing information on forward selling, market intelligence, using market reports, hedging, co-op marketing, and grading.

The third section will contain useful information for consumers on buying by grade, tips on quality, comparing quality, buying in bulk, pick-it-yourself and buying at roadside markets and farmers' markets.

1896 YEARBOOK REMINDS US WHEN...

In the 1896 Yearbook of Agriculture, then Secretary of Agriculture Morton reported that "The farmers of the United States hold 72 out of each 100 farms--occupied by their owners--absolutely free from mortgages or other incumbrances."

He also said that during the fiscal year, USDA put out 376 publications, "principally for gratuitous circulation," aggregating 6,561,700 copies.

INSIDE INFORMATION is published for distribution to public affairs and information staff members of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, its agencies, State Departments of Agriculture and Land Grant Universities. Any items, comments and inquiries should be addressed to Stan W. Prochaska, Assistant Public Affairs Director, Room 407-A, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250, to AGRO02 on the Dialcom INTERCOMM system, or call (202) 447-7454.